

Delta College
Board of Trustees Dinner Meeting
Delta College Downtown Saginaw Center
Tuesday, October 8, 2024
5:30 pm

Board Present: A. Clark, S. Gannon, B. Handley-Miller, M. Nash, M. Rowley, M. Wood

Board Absent: A. Baldwin, D. Middleton, M. Thomas

Others Present: R. Battinkoff, T. Brown, W. Childs, P. Clark, A. Cramer, R. Curry, C. DeEulis, J. Foco, M. Gavin, L. Govitz, D. Hopkins, T. Johnroe, K. Kiste-Toner, G. Luczak, D. McQuiston, J. Mulders, K. Nelson, J. Perry, S. Raube, K. Schuler, S. Shinkel, A. Ursuy, C. Wilson

Press Present: None

Board Vice Chair, S. Gannon, called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. She turned the meeting over to Shelly Raube, Vice President of Student Empowerment and Success. S. Raube introduced Karry Kiste-Toner, Associate Dean of Retention. Their presentation was about impacting student success through milestones and early momentum metrics.

S. Raube shared that the presentation would include the challenges to retention, how to understand early momentum, the sharing of Delta’s data, what academic milestones are and why they matter, the importance of connection through an interactive exercise and finally an action plan. She began with a definition of FTIAC – First Time in Any College. This is used in reporting to IPEDS for measuring key outcomes such as retention, completion, and graduation rates against other institutions nationally. FTIACs represent the foundational cohort of future graduates. They are a critical part of our growth in enrollment, and they align with the building of a college-going culture.

S. Raube shared a chart showing the fall-to-fall retention rate for FTIACs dropping from 62.9% in 2021/2022 to 58.8% in 2022/2023. We need to understand why we are struggling to retain these students. Some of the commonly known challenges for students in their academic journey include the following: part-time enrollment; financial barriers; inadequate academic preparedness; balancing life responsibilities; lack of academic advising; mental health and stress; difficulty navigating college systems; and stopping out. Knowing all of these we need to ask the question, “How do we ensure students consistently stay on track and achieve their goal?”

S. Raube said that early momentum metrics (EMM) are the key first-year performance indicators that predict long-term student success. EMM focuses on critical milestones like credit accumulation, gateway course completion and persistence from term to term. These metrics allow colleges to implement timely changes to improve student success and close equity gaps.

- Credit momentum measures how quickly students accumulate college-level credits.
- Gateway course momentum tracks whether students complete key courses like college-level math and English in their first year.
- Persistence momentum measures whether students persist from their first to second term.

In trying to understand EMM we need to better understand additional data such as credit completion ratio -the number of credits completed in the first year divided by the number of credits attempted during the first year. S. Raube shared a chart with credit completion ratios for full-time FTIACs from fall of 2018 – 2023. The data shows a higher percentage of students completing their courses compared to FTIAC students, indicating they face more challenges. These challenges include under preparedness, adjustments to college and balancing responsibilities. There is a need for targeted interventions for the FTIAC students.

The credit accumulation rate is the number of students who completed 24 or more credits in their first year divided by the number of students in the cohort. This is a critical predictor of long-term success. The data shows a higher percentage of students completing 24 credits in the first year compared to FTIAC students. This shows a need for a support mechanism to help these students achieve this milestone.

Academic milestones are measurable, intermediate, educational achievements that students reach along the path to degree completion. They include completing college-level math and English within the first two years; earning 12 or more college-level credits in the first semester; accumulating 24 – 30 or more credits within the first year; retention fall to fall; completing a transfer-ready curriculum and earning a certificate or degree. Academic milestones are key indicators of a student’s likelihood to complete their degree. They predict long-term success; build academic momentum; early identification of struggles; improve retention and completion rate; and close equity gaps.

K. Kiste-Toner had everyone complete a brief pre-survey. Then attendees were paired up and asked to engage in a conversation based on a set of questions. After the activity, they took a post survey. K. Kiste-Toner shared the results of the pre and post surveys.

S. Raube then shared the action plan for Delta. This includes determining milestones; setting milestone checkpoints, building strong student advisor connections; fostering connection across the campus; and leveraging technology.

There being no further business, the dinner meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm.

Talisa Brown, Assistant Board Secretary

Andrea Ursuy, Board Secretary